



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF ECOLOGY
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December 21, 2004

The Honorable Gary Locke
Governor of Washington
Post Office Box 40002
Olympia, Washington 98504-0002

Dear Governor Locke:

Enclosed is the draft report of the Oil Spill Early Action Task Force that you created in November with Rear Admiral Jeffrey Garrett. At that time, you asked the task force to recommend ways to improve how we respond to spills at night, in fog, and during bad weather.

The Dalco Passage oil spill demonstrated how quickly spills can cause environmental and economic damage. Although Washington has one of the best spill prevention and response programs in the world, we can always be better. Ecology has already enacted several measures in response to the Dalco Passage oil spill (see Enclosure III), and the task force has built on these efforts by providing thoughtful advice on how we should further improve our preparedness.

The task force members dedicated many hours involving five day-long meetings, extensive document review, and numerous phone calls to develop a remarkable degree of unanimity on how we can improve our response capability. Given the short timeline, the task force did not have time to set priorities, propose funding mechanisms, or establish deadlines for each recommendation. Many of these recommendations cannot be implemented within Ecology's existing budget, so the "placeholder" in your proposed 2005-07 budget to cover the highest-priority recommendations is welcome and needed. Enclosure II provides Ecology's summary of the implementation costs of the recommendations and our advice on funding priorities.

I appreciate your leadership and support in helping us protect Washington from oil spills.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Linda Hoffman".

Linda Hoffman
Director

Enclosures: (4)

- Oil Spill Early Action Task Force Charter
- Cost Estimates and Advice on Priorities
- Actions Taken by Ecology since the Dalco Passage Oil Spill
- Oil Spill Early Action Task Force – Draft Report

The Honorable Gary Locke
December 21, 2004
Page 2

cc: Capt. Myles Boothe, 13th District, U.S. Coast Guard
Tom Fitzsimmons, Governor's Office
Bill Alkire, Governor's Office
Ron Shultz, Office of Financial Management
Dale Jensen, Ecology Spill, Prevention and Preparedness Program
Tim Thompson, Thompson Smitch Consulting